

BIRD LIFE IN SOUTHWESTERN FRANCE.

BY THOMAS D. BURLEIGH.

THESE notes were taken during 1918, while I was serving in France with the American Expeditionary Force. I was then with the 10th Engineers, a forestry regiment that was engaged in cutting pilings, ties, and lumber of various dimensions. We were located in the Department of Landes during our entire period of foreign service, so I had an opportunity to make a detailed study of the bird life in this part of France. Our work necessarily kept us busy for six days out of the week, but our Sundays were usually free, and, being in the woods as we were, there was an opportunity of picking up odd notes even while at work. From the first of February until the 14th of September, and again for a week in December, from the 19th to the 26th, I was at Ponteux, while from the 14th of September to the 19th of December I was at Sore.

Ponteux is a small town in the extreme southwestern part of France. The surrounding country is, with the exception of occasionally scattered sand dunes, level and largely covered with long stretches of maritime pine. Small streams are numerous, and bordered here and there with alders and a sprinkling of oaks. In places the water has spread out and formed tangled alder swamps. Such cultivated land as there is lies about the town and the scattered farms. Ten kilometers west of Ponteux lies a large lake, Etang Aureilhan, formed by the damming up of a large creek, which flows from here to the ocean, a distance of eight kilometers.

Sore is fifty kilometers northeast of Ponteux. Here the country is not different from that about the latter town, although there is even less cultivated land and no large bodies of water within many miles. The Seyre River flows through the town, but is a comparatively small stream.

The following are the birds observed, with notes on their actions, migration, and nesting habits. Few of them are found in America, but many are so similar to our species, and some of them so different, that it was thought that my list would be of general interest to the readers of 'The Auk.'

1. **Turdus viscivorus viscivorus** L. MISTLE THRUSH.—In a large alder swamp close to the town three of these birds could be heard singing during the early morning and late afternoon throughout the spring and early summer. High in one of the larger trees they would pour out their varied whistles, trills, squawks, etc., for hours at a time. Always timid, they would become silent at the slightest alarm, only to begin again in a short time from another tree some distance away. The last bird was heard singing on July 16, and once quiet they were not seen again. This one swamp was the only place where any of this species were found.

2. **Turdus philomelos philomelos** Brehm. SONG THRUSH.—This species was a migrant only, flocks of varying size appearing in the spring and fall. They frequented thickets and underbrush about water, and were usually timid, disappearing with a sharp, sparrow-like chip when approached. The first ones were seen on March 24. By the 29th they were plentiful and singing. On that day some thirty of them were found in the tops of the pines at the edge of a stretch of woods, all singing. The song was a rich broken warble, and uttered by many of the birds at the same time was very pleasing. From the first of April on they gradually disappeared, and by the end of the month none were left. They were first seen again on October 3, when one bird was found feeding in a thicket bordering a stream. October 24 numerous small flocks were seen. The last record for the year was December 14, one bird again being seen.

3. **Turdus musicus musicus** L. REDWING.—On November 21 one bird was seen. It was feeding at the edge of a thicket, and on being approached flew up into a sapling where its red flanks and the line over its eye were easily noticeable.

4. **Turdus pilaris** L. FIELDFARE.—But two birds were seen, flushed on November 18 from underbrush bordering a small stream. They were very timid, flying into the top of a large tree and then into the woods some distance away.

5. **Turdus merula merula** L. BLACKBIRD.—Plentiful and resident, and found about thickets and underbrush close to water. Although wary and hard to approach, they would invariably utter a sharp spluttering outburst on flying, and this frequently attracted notice to them where otherwise they would have been passed by unobserved. Another note they had was a low cluck. By the end of March they were frequently heard singing, especially toward dusk. The song was a loud, rich warble. During early summer family parties were occasionally encountered instead of the single birds seen before. On the 18th of November these birds were unusually plentiful, as many as ten being frightened from one thicket. Although largely resident, some had evidently wandered in from farther north.

6. **Œnanthe œnanthe œnanthe** (L.). WHEATEAR.—A pair of these birds were first seen on April 12 at the edge of a slashing. They lingered here for a week, being last recorded on the 19th. They returned again early in the fall, three birds being seen on August 18. By the 25th of this month they were fairly plentiful, but for a short time only, soon

gradually disappearing. They were always found about open fields or slashings, and although inconspicuous on the ground, their white rumps caught the eye when in flight. With the exception of a low note of alarm when too closely approached, they were always silent. Occasionally one might be seen on a fence post or on a brush pile, but they seldom left the ground. On October 20 the last bird was seen, feeding at the edge of newly plowed ground.

7. *Saxicola rubetra rubetra* (L.). WHINCHAT.—A scarce summer resident, found invariably about fields or slashings overgrown with briars and furze. Erect, and with nervously jerking tail, they could be seen on the top of a furze bush, dropping occasionally to the ground for food or flying to another bush a short distance away. Usually they were in pairs and always silent. April 26 the first bird was seen, October 13 the last one.

8. *Saxicola torquata rubicola* (L.). STONECHAT.—Although less plentiful during the winter months, these birds were seen throughout the year about fields and slashings overgrown with briars and furze. Like the preceding, they remained in the tops of the bushes, dropping to the ground for food, but never remaining there long. On being approached they would fly from bush to bush, uttering a harsh, rolling chatter. On the 20th of May a male was seen in the top of a small tree, singing. The song was a weak, even-toned, drawn-out trill.

9. *Phœnicurus phœnicurus phœnicurus* (L.). REDSTART.—On April 7 one bird was seen in underbrush bordering a pond. Two were seen on April 16 in alders bordering a small stream, and from then on they gradually became plentiful, and were found entirely about houses and sheds. In the town of Mimizan-les-Bains they were much in evidence, singing from the gables of the roofs or from the tops of the chimneys. The song was loud and clear, a short, rich, thrush-like trill. On June 8 fully grown young, out of the nest several days at least, were seen about an unused house. During the summer and early fall these birds became very scarce, and never became very plentiful again. The last one was seen October 13.

10. *Dandalus rubecula rubecula* (L.). ROBIN.—Resident and very plentiful, with their small size, long tilted gray tail and habit of feeding about thickets and brush piles, these birds reminded me much of Wrens. They were found at the edge of the pine woods, but were seen largely in the neighborhood of houses. They sang at all times throughout the year, in good weather and bad, although their song, disconnected, of short warbles, trills, and occasional unmusical, wiry notes, was more evident in early spring and late fall, when other birds were largely silent. Their commonest note was a sharp chip.

11. *Luscinia megarhyncha megarhyncha* Brehm. NIGHTINGALE.—A plentiful summer resident, frequenting thickets and underbrush at the edge of fields and roads. The first bird was seen on April 25, singing from a dense thicket. The song reminded me much of our Catbird's, although it was richer and fuller. By the 28th of April the birds were quite plentiful and many were heard singing. On May 20 the first one

was heard at night. After the first week in June their singing ceased entirely and very few were seen after that. The last one was seen August 11 in some underbrush at the edge of an open field.

12. *Prunella modularis modularis* (L.). HEDGE SPARROW.—On November 21 two birds were seen, singly, feeding in thickets. They were far from timid and easy to approach. This species is evidently but a straggler, or at best a scarce migrant here.

13. *Sylvia communis communis* Lath. WHITETHROAT.—About thickets and hedges bordering open fields and woods this species was quite plentiful during the summer months. First seen on April 17, they were soon much in evidence, creeping about the hedge rows or fluttering overhead, uttering their bubbling, rollicking song. In late summer they became silent, but were not at all scarce. The last one was seen October 1.

14. *Sylvia hortensis hortensis* (Gm.). GARDEN WARBLER.—This bird was but a scarce migrant and seen but once. On April 25 five birds were found silently feeding in underbrush at the edge of a stretch of woods.

15. *Sylvia atricapilla atricapilla* (L.). BLACKCAP.—This species was fairly plentiful, but occurred as a migrant only. The first one was seen on March 24, and within a week many could be found feeding in thickets and low underbrush. The song which at this time was frequently heard was a short low warble, broken by gurgling calls and low trills. By the middle of April all had disappeared and none were seen again until September 26, when an adult male was found feeding in underbrush bordering a stream. They were last seen October 24, but were quite plentiful on that date.

16. *Sylvia undata undata* Bodd. DARTFORD WARBLER.—Resident and plentiful about fields and slashings overgrown with briars and furze. Here they could be seen creeping about the underbrush, where with their long tilted tails they appeared much like Wrens. On June 16 they were feeding young out of the nest. On that date a male was heard singing; the song was a short, weak, slightly harsh warble.

17. *Cettia cetti cetti* (Marm.). CETTI'S WARBLER.—This small reddish brown Warbler was common during the summer about small streams and ponds, the edges of which were bordered with reeds. Although shy and seldom seen, it was conspicuous by its loud ringing song. This consisted of two sharp, abrupt notes and then a short trill. The first bird was seen April 6. On September 2 one was heard singing for the last time.

18. *Acrocephalus schœnobæus* (L.). SEDGE WARBLER.—This bird was seemingly but an irregular migrant, being seen only during early spring and early fall. As its name implies, it was found in reeds or alders bordering water. The two times it was seen were March 24, two birds, and August 11 one bird.

19. *Phylloscopus trochilus trochilus* (L.). WILLOW WARBLER.—A plentiful spring and fall migrant, haunting underbrush at the edge of open fields or woods. Although plain plumaged and small in size, they were easily noticeable because of their great activity. Flitting from limb to

limb or flying out after an insect, they were never still, for even when pausing for a moment they nervously jerked their tail continuously. The first bird was seen March 23, but it was several weeks before they became plentiful. On April 7 one was heard singing for the first time, a short, sweet warble. From the middle of April on they gradually disappeared and by the first of May none were left. They were first seen again on August 11 and within a week were quite plentiful. On August 18 a large flock was seen. After the middle of September they became scarce, but one was occasionally seen until the first week of December.

20. **Regulus ignicapillus ignicapillus** (Temm.). FIRE-CRESTED WREN.—This little bird resembled in every respect our Golden-crowned Kinglet—size, appearance, actions, and notes. It was a plentiful winter resident, occurring in small flocks, either alone or with wandering flocks of Long-tailed or Blue Tits. In the spring the last bird was seen on March 10, several feeding in the tops of the maritime pines at the edge of a stretch of woods. In the fall they were first seen on September 22, and were soon of common occurrence.

21. **Ægithalos caudatus**. LONG-TAILED TIT.—Plentiful and resident, and occurring in loose, wandering flocks. Always noisy and with a great variety of notes these birds, although small, were far from inconspicuous. Most frequently heard was a deep-toned chip and a thin, high-pitched call identical with that of our Golden-crowned Kinglet. They nested early, for on April 28 two nests were found with newly hatched young. These were large balls of moss lined with feathers and well covered externally with lichens. The entrance was a small opening at the side, barely large enough to permit the bird to enter. One nest was thirty feet from the ground at the outer end of a limb of a large cork oak at the side of a road. The other was but five feet from the ground in a large briar at the side of a road, in the middle of a large mass of dead leaves lodged there during the winter.

22. **Parus major major** L. GREAT TIT.—This species was not so plentiful as the last, and occurred usually in pairs or at most three or four birds. They were resident, and being of a wandering disposition could, except during the nesting season, be found almost anywhere, even in the middle of the larger towns. Always noisy, they were especially so in the spring, uttering for long intervals at a time a repetition of two unmusical, high pitched notes. A late nest was found July 15 with almost fully fledged young. It was three feet from the ground, in a natural cavity in the trunk of a large maritime pine at the edge of a stretch of woods, and was a matted bed of green moss, bits of wool, and considerable cow's hair.

23. **Parus cæruleus cæruleus** L. BLUE TIT.—Plentiful and resident. Next to the Long-tailed Tits these birds were the most frequently observed of this family. Like the others, they occurred in small wandering flocks and frequently were found with them. A nest found the sixth of June with large young was twelve feet from the ground in a natural cavity in the trunk of an oak at the side of a road through the woods. Another

found June 12 with almost fully fledged young was in the hollow of a large shell lying on the ground near a munition works.

24. **Parus cristatus mitratus** Brehm. CRESTED TIT.— This species was resident and plentiful except during the nesting season. At this time these birds evidently retired to the deep pine woods to nest. During the fall and winter they were found with others of this family, and were easily recognized by their crest and dull plumage. On March 17 one was heard uttering a loud, clear, two-syllabled whistle.

25. **Sitta europæa europæa** L. NUTHATCH.— With the exception of the black line over its eye, this species resembled very closely our Red-breasted Nuthatch. It was found throughout the year wherever there were stretches of woods and was frequently seen associating with the Tits. Its loud, querulous notes made it noticeable wherever it occurred. On March 24 one was heard uttering a loud, clear, rolling whistle. Toward the end of May young, fully grown and out of the nest, were seen.

26. **Certhia familiaris** subsp.? CREEPER.— This species resembled in every respect — size, actions, and notes, and general plumage — our Brown Creeper. It was noisier, however, and far more agile, feeding with seeming ease on the smaller limbs, where it was often seen. It could be found throughout the year in the pines, and was often seen with the Tits and the Nuthatch. A nest found May 7 with four fully fledged young was three feet from the ground, in a crack in the trunk of a large maritime pine at the edge of a stretch of woods, and facing an open field. It was composed largely of green moss with a few feathers, soft grasses, and bits of wool.

27. **Troglodytes troglodytes troglodytes** (L.). WREN.— This, the only one of the family found in Europe, reminded me much of our Winter Wren. It was of the same size, actions, and notes, even down to its song, which could be heard at any and all times. Although found at times about houses, it was largely seen in the pine woods, feeding in the tangled thickets of briars. It was resident and plentiful at all times. Several old nests were found in pockets in upturned roots, balls of small twigs and green moss.

28. **Sturnus vulgaris vulgaris** L. STARLING.— This bird was seemingly an irregular straggler only in this part of France, for I have but two records of its occurrence. On October 24 a flock of ten birds was seen in the tops of several chestnut trees at the edge of a field, and on December 22 a flock of eight was noticed flying by overhead.

29. **Garrulus glandarius glandarius** (L.). JAY.— Resident and plentiful, occurring, except during the nesting season, in noisy, wandering flocks. With their dull brown plumage they would be far from conspicuous but for their white rump and harsh cries. Feeding in the tops of the pines at the edge of the woods, they were seldom quiet, and so always much in evidence.

30. **Pica pica pica** (L.). MAGPIE.— This bird was seemingly in every respect like our Magpie. It was resident and plentiful in the more open country, but was never seen deep in the pine woods. On May 12 a bird

was seen flying from a nest seventy feet from the ground, in the top of a large maritime pine at the edge of a short stretch of woods.

31. **Corvus corone corone** L. CARRION CROW.— In appearance and actions these birds resembled very much our Common Crow. Their vocabulary was more varied, however, some of their notes reminding me much of the Raven. They were at all times quite plentiful and occurred equally often in the open country and deep in the woods. They were usually seen singly or in pairs, although on February 24 sixty were found feeding together in a large field. During early spring they were occasionally seen circling and soaring high overhead.

32. **Lanius excubitor excubitor** L. GREAT GRAY SHRIKE.— On November 2 two birds were seen on a telephone wire at the side of a road. This was my only record for the occurrence of this species. In appearance they reminded me of our Northern Shrike.

33. **Lanius collurio collurio** L. RED-BACKED SHRIKE.— As its name implies, this bird was easily recognized by its reddish brown upper plumage. It was a scarce and irregular summer resident, haunting thickets and underbrush bordering open fields. The first bird was seen June 2, and on July 7 several were found about thickets at the lower end of the lake. They were invariably silent and timid.

34. **Lanius senator senator** L. WOODCHAT SHRIKE.— This bird, with its conspicuous plumage, underparts white, wings and tail black, and top of head and neck light brown, was a plentiful summer resident about thickets and underbrush bordering open fields or roads. In habits it was typical of its family, stationing itself in the top of a bush or tree, from which at intervals it dropped to the ground for food. The first bird was seen April 24, and on May 5 one was heard singing for the first time, the song being a hoarse, erratic warble. On August 11 the last bird for the year was seen in the top of a tree at the edge of an open field.

35. **Muscicapa striata striata** (Pall.). SPOTTED FLYCATCHER.— This dull plumaged little Flycatcher was a plentiful summer resident. It was seen largely at the edge of the pine woods or in the small scattered groves of oaks or alders, and never far from open fields or streams. The first bird was seen May 5, and within a few weeks they were of common occurrence. Always silent, however, and a little timid, they were far from conspicuous. The last bird was seen on October 21 feeding at the edge of a field.

36. **Muscicapa hypoleuca hypoleuca** (Pall.). PIED FLYCATCHER.— Throughout the spring and summer none of these birds were seen, but during the fall migration they were quite plentiful. The first bird appeared on August 25, and within a short time they were much in evidence. Unlike the preceding species, they were more or less noisy, uttering most of the time a sharp chip. They were seen largely at the edges of the woods, frequently in company with the Tits. The last bird was seen October 6, several being observed on that date.

37. **Hirundo rustica rustica** (L.). CHIMNEY SWALLOW.— In appear-

ance this bird closely resembled our Barn Swallow, and in habits and notes differed from it in no way. Flying by overhead or circling about the barn in which was its nest, it had the same cheery twitter and the same happy disposition. It was plentiful about both the scattered farms and the towns, and nested indiscriminately under the eaves of the sheds, the barns, railroad stations, and houses. The first bird was seen March 29, five being observed flying low over a field, and by April 13 they could be found everywhere. On June 6 young nestlings of the first brood were well grown. On June 12 a nest with four fresh eggs was found on a beam under the eaves of a railroad station. The nest was of pellets of mud and grasses, with a lining of feathers. The eggs were white, spotted over the entire surface with varying shades of brown. Another, on the 27th of June, held five fresh eggs, and was on a beam under the eaves of a small shed at the side of a road. A third, on July 10, held three slightly incubated eggs and was under the eaves of a railroad station. A fourth, found at Dax on the 12th of July, held four slightly incubated eggs and was on a beam in the roof of a balcony of a hotel. By August 18 the birds were found gathering into flocks, fifty being seen at one place on telephone wires at the side of a road. On September 1 a flock was noticed noisily convening in the top of a large sycamore. This habit of alighting in trees was found to be a common practice with this species. The last birds for the year were seen November 10, a flock of ten being found at the edge of Sangon, feeding about an old church.

38. *Chelidon urbica urbica* L. HOUSE MARTIN.—In appearance this bird, with the exception of its white rump, resembled closely our Tree Swallow. It was a plentiful summer resident about all the towns, there being none in which one pair at least could not be found nesting. The first bird was seen April 28, and on May 16 a pair were seen working on a newly started nest under the eaves of a house. A nest found June 14 held four fresh eggs and was under the eaves of a railroad station, on the top of an old nest of the Chimney Swallow. This was an unusual situation, for all the others found were plastered against the sides of the buildings, with no support of any kind. The nests were flask-shaped, of pellets of mud and grasses, with a lining inside of grasses and feathers. The eggs were white, unspotted. Fully fledged young were seen still being fed in the nest on July 28. The last birds for the year were seen October 24, a flock of ten being found feeding over an open field with a number of Chimney Swallows. At all times these birds were quite sociable, and it was seldom that a single pair were found nesting alone.

39. *Riparia riparia riparia* (L.). SAND MARTIN.—This bird is of course our familiar Bank Swallow. It was for some reason but an irregular migrant, although there were many banks suitable for it to nest in. During the spring it was seen but once, five birds being found April 28, feeding over the lower end of the lake. August 11 it was seen again, this time twenty birds being found on a telephone wire at the side of a road. August 18 a flock of fully a hundred was observed at almost the same spot.

It was seen for the last time September 22, a single bird feeding over an open field with several Chimney Swallows.

40. **Chloris chloris chloris** (L.). GREENFINCH.— This was a plentiful summer resident about the towns and the scattered farms. With its dull greenish plumage, it would have been easily passed by but for its characteristic song, a prolonged lazy drawl. This was frequently heard during the heat of the day, when other birds were silent, and so was more noticeable. The first birds were seen April 21, a flock flying into the top of a tree ahead of me. They were soon plentiful and remained so until early fall. In flight they uttered a note much like that of a Crossbill, and this resemblance was heightened by the way in which they tore apart pine cones for the seeds they contained. September 26 a small flock was seen for the last time.

41. **Carduelis carduelis carduelis**. GOLDFINCH.— This pretty little bird proved to be but a migrant only. During the spring it was very scarce, for it was seen but once. On April 24 one bird was seen in the top of a small tree at the edge of a field. From early fall on, however, it was almost plentiful and small flocks were frequently encountered. September 2 fifteen were found feeding on weed seeds at the edge of a millet field, and flocks of this size were of more or less common occurrence for the next few months. On October 22 fully a hundred were found feeding together in an open field. The last record for the year was November 21, two birds flying by overhead.

42. **Spinus spinus spinus**. SISKIN.— For a few weeks in early spring this species was fairly plentiful, feeding in the alders and scattered poplars along the streams. It was seen for the first time on March 10, when a flock of fifty of these birds was found feeding in the alders bordering a small creek. They were very restless, seldom remaining quiet long, and uttering a harsh twitter as they moved about. Another note that was commonly heard was a low call quite like that of our Goldfinch. On March 29 the last birds were seen, several flying by overhead.

43. **Serinus canarius serinus** (L.). SERIN FINCH.— In size and actions this species resembled the last, but in plumage was quite unlike it. The throat and breast were yellow, the sides of the latter well streaked with brown. The cheeks were reddish brown. The upper parts were brown, with a patch of yellow on the neck. It was a plentiful summer resident in the open country about the edges of the towns and about the scattered farms. The first bird was seen April 21, singing from the top of a tree at the edge of a field. The song was buzzing in nature, prolonged, and far from musical, and so distinctive that the birds were easily recognized whenever heard. On May 27 a nest was found with one fresh egg, fifteen feet from the ground at the outer end of a limb of a small oak at the side of a road. It was made of fine rootlets and bits of wool, well lined with chicken feathers, and sparingly covered externally with lichens. Another found June 5 with newly hatched young was fifteen feet from the ground, at the outer end of a limb of a small maritime pine at the edge of a stretch of woods. It was made of grasses, well lined with chicken feathers, and covered

externally with lichens. By the first of September the birds were seen in small flocks, but a few were still singing. October 22 three were found feeding at the edge of a field, and were the last seen for the year.

44. *Passer domesticus domesticus* (L.). HOUSE SPARROW.

45. *Passer montanus montanus* (L.). TREE SPARROW.—These two species were found in the towns and about some of the farms, and were plentiful and noisy wherever seen. They were much alike in appearance, the latter differing from the former in having the white of the throat extending up and forming a collar on the lower part of the neck. They appeared to associate indiscriminately, and one was about as much of a nuisance as the other.

46. *Fringilla cœlebs cœlebs* L. CHAFFINCH.—This species was undoubtedly the most plentiful of any of those found in France. It was resident, and although seen largely in the open cultivated country was of common occurrence in the pine woods, feeding in the upper branches of the larger trees. During the winter the birds wandered about in small flocks, and although never scarce they became unusually numerous during late February and early March, when their numbers were probably augmented by those which had wintered farther south. By the middle of March they had begun to scatter out and were soon seen commonly in pairs. On the 17th of March the first bird was heard singing. The song was a rapid, rich warble, reminding me much of our Vesper Sparrow, but fuller and clearer. On April 21 a female was seen gathering bits of wool from the side of a road, and on May 12 the first nest was found. This, like all the others later seen, was made of green moss, lined with soft grasses, feathers, and horsehair, and well covered externally with lichens. It held four fresh eggs and was fifteen feet from the ground, in a crotch against the trunk of a large cork oak at the side of a road. The eggs were bluish gray-clouded at the larger end with lilac, and sparingly spotted with brown. Another nest found the same day held three slightly incubated eggs, and was twenty-five feet from the ground, at the outer end of a limb of a large cork oak at the side of a road. A third nest, the 19th of May, held four slightly incubated eggs and was eight feet from the ground, in a crotch of a small maritime pine at the edge of some underbrush bordering a road. The last nest found the 7th of July, with four slightly incubated eggs, was thirty feet from the ground, at the outer end of a limb of a large sycamore at the side of a road. Toward the end of July the birds were gathering into small flocks again and soon few individual birds could be seen. On October 6 a flock of fully five hundred of these birds was found feeding at the edge of a large millet field.

47. *Pyrrhula pyrrhula europæa* Vieill. BULLFINCH.—This species, one of the handsomest in France, was seen only during the fall migration, but it was fairly plentiful then. The first bird was seen October 27, when one adult male was found feeding in a thicket at the edge of a field. It was a little timid, and on being approached flew away with a low, querulous note, distinctive of this species alone. For the next two months these birds

were frequently encountered in small flocks, usually two or three together, and never more than four. They seemed to show a preference for water, for they were largely found in alders and underbrush bordering streams and ponds. They probably remained until early spring, for several were seen as late as December 22.

48. ***Emberiza calandra calandra*** L. COMMON BUNTING.— This bird was seen only during the fall migration and then it was very scarce. But two birds were recorded, one October 22 and the other October 25, feeding each time in underbrush bordering an open field. In general appearance and actions they reminded me much of our Song Sparrow.

49. ***Emberiza cirlus*** L. CIRL BUNTING.— On December 14 one bird was seen feeding with a small flock of Reed Buntings at the edge of a millet field. This was my only record for the occurrence of this species.

50. ***Emberiza schoeniclus schoeniclus*** L. REED BUNTING.— It was only during the fall migration that these birds were seen, but they were fairly plentiful then. They occurred in small flocks and were largely found feeding in millet fields. The first birds were seen October 22 and the last small flock December 22. When approached they did not fly until almost stepped on, and then flew up suddenly, uttering as they went a characteristic high-pitched note. This, with their white outer tail feathers, made them easy to identify.

51. ***Motacilla alba alba*** L. WHITE WAGTAIL.— Resident, and plentiful about open fields, especially those under cultivation. Although seen occasionally on a fence post, they were rarely found off the ground, and were essentially birds of the meadows and pastures. On one occasion, however, September 15, three were frightened from an alder thicket in the branches of which they had evidently been feeding. They occurred largely singly or two or three birds together. Small flocks were encountered but very seldom. On June 1 five fully grown young were seen, out of the nest several days at least.

52. ***Motacilla flava flava*** L. GRAY-HEADED WAGTAIL.— Unlike the last this bird was only a winter resident. It was common about water, and there were no ponds or streams of any size about which one or two could not be found feeding during the fall and winter. Single birds were frequently seen, but small flocks were of equally common occurrence. In the spring the last bird was recorded March 17. The first one appeared again August 25, and within a week they were quite plentiful. On September 8 they were unusually numerous along the shore of the lake, and were observed in small flocks, feeding close to the heads of grazing cattle. This habit was later found to be a common one with this species. On September 15 a flock of fully fifty of these birds was seen, scattered about several cows in the middle of a field.

53. ***Anthus trivialis trivialis*** (L.). TREE PIPIT.— In appearance and actions this bird was very similar to our Pipit. It was resident and plentiful throughout the year. During the fall and winter it occurred in

- flocks of varying size, feeding in cultivated fields and pastures, but on the

approach of spring the flocks broke up and the birds were soon seen singly or in pairs scattered through the pine woods. Here they were frequently flushed from the ground, but were as often seen in the trees. The song, which was frequently heard during the spring and early summer, was given on the wing while fluttering overhead or from the top of a tree.

54. *Alauda arvensis arvensis*, L. SKYLARK.— This bird occurred as a migrant only. During the spring it was scarce and was seen but twice. February 24 a flock of fully a hundred of these birds was found feeding in a newly plowed field, and on March 17 two were flushed while crossing a millet field. In flight they uttered a low, gurgling note, but otherwise were silent and inconspicuous. October 19 they were seen again for the first time and almost at once were plentiful, small flocks being frequently encountered, flying by overhead or feeding in the cultivated fields. At this time they were restless and noisy, seldom remaining on the ground long, and continually uttering their low gurgling note and another short, high-pitched call. On October 25 two hundred were seen in one flock. The last bird was seen November 21, two being flushed from the edge of a millet field.

55. *Lullula arborea arborea* (L.). WOODLARK.— On September 22 five birds were found at one place circling high overhead over a large field, singing. Occasionally one would drop down into the top of a tree, or to the ground, only to fly high into the air again, still singing. This was my first record for the occurrence of this species, and I saw it but once again when, November 18, two birds were flushed from the edge of a newly plowed field.

56. *Apus apus apus* (L.). SWIFT.— In size and general appearance this bird resembled our Chimney Swift, but differed in having a forked tail, the end of which was smooth, without barbs. It was a summer resident and plentiful in and about the towns. The first bird was seen May 5 and within a few days they were of common occurrence. On May 16 many were feeding over the town of Pontoux toward dusk, and were noisy and mating then, chasing each other about with an often repeated, high-pitched squeal. On July 7 birds were noticed evidently feeding young, five being seen entering crevices in the tile roof of a house. Although still numerous up to the middle of July, they suddenly became scarce, and on July 21 the last ones for the year were seen, several circling and feeding overhead.

57. *Caprimulgus europæus europæus* L. NIGHTJAR.— This bird closely resembled in appearance and actions our Whip-poor-will and was a plentiful summer resident in the pine woods, especially at the edge of slashings or fields overgrown with furze and briars, in which places they nested. On June 18, while crossing a slashing, a female was flushed from two well-incubated eggs lying on a litter of pine bark at the foot of a briar. The eggs were creamy white, marbled with lilac and brown. On June 27 a bird was seen at dusk calling from a tree at the side of a road through the woods, uttering a deep rolling, churr-r-r-r, with a rising and falling in-

flection. This note was frequently heard for the next month, but about the first of August the birds became silent and soon disappeared.

58. **Dryobates major** (L.).¹ GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER.—In general appearance and notes this bird resembled our Hairy Woodpecker, but there was one striking difference. The under tail coverts were a bright red. Like our species, it was noisy but wary, and although frequently heard, for it was resident and plentiful in the pine woods, it was usually seen from a distance. A nest found June 2 held large young and was thirty feet from the ground, in the trunk of a sycamore at the edge of a stretch of woods bordering a pond.

59. **Dryobates minor** (L.). LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER.—On May 17 two birds were seen at the edge of a slashing in the woods. This was my only record for the occurrence of this species. In appearance they reminded me much of our Downy Woodpecker, being like the preceding species, but much smaller.

60. **Picus viridis viridis** L.¹ GREEN WOODPECKER.—At a distance this bird reminded me much of our Flicker, for it was practically the same size, and had the same bounding flight and the conspicuous white rump. A close view, however, showed the greenish yellow tinge of its plumage, from which it received its name. It was resident and plentiful throughout the pine woods, but while noisy and often heard it was less often seen, for it was wary and hard to approach. Several times, however, birds were found feeding on the ground at the edge of a slashing or of a field, and then did not fly so quickly. On May 26 a nest was found with six fresh eggs, fifteen feet from the ground, in the trunk of a small oak in the middle of a short stretch of woods. The cavity was fully a foot and a half deep, and on the chips on the bottom of it the glossy white eggs were lying.

61. **Jynx torquilla torquilla** L. WRYNECK.—On September 2 one bird was seen feeding on the ground at the side of a road. This was my only record for the occurrence of this species.

62. **Alcedo ispida ispida** L. KINGFISHER.—This bird was but an irregular straggler and was seen but twice along the same small stream, October 27 and November 1. On the latter date the one bird, as it flew by me upstream, uttered at intervals a short, shrill note.

63. **Upupa epops epops** L. HOOPOE.—This bird was a summer resident and fairly plentiful in the open cultivated country. The first one appeared about the middle of April, and from that date on one could frequently be heard uttering its loud, rolling cry from the top of some large tree. On May 29 a nest was found with small young, eight feet from the ground, in a natural cavity in the trunk of a large oak in a grove of trees about a farm house. There was no evidence of any attempt to construct a nest, the young lying on the foul-smelling decayed wood. Both the male and female were seen feeding their young. The female herself refused at first to flush from the nest, and on attempting to remove her she fluttered violently about, uttering a loud, hissing grunt and seeming, with her long neck

¹ Subspecies undetermined.

and raised crest, almost formidable. August 11 the last birds were seen for the year, four flying by overhead.

64. **Cuculus canorus canorus** L. CUCKOO.—A plentiful summer resident. On April 11 one was heard for the first time uttering its loud "cuckoo" from the edge of a stretch of pine woods, and within a few days they seemed to be everywhere. On April 17 they seemed to be especially noisy and could be heard anywhere and at any time during the day. In appearance they were about the same size as our Sparrow Hawk and had the same narrow build and flight, and so reminded me much of this bird. May 5 two were seen mating, the male chasing the female about with drooping wings and tail outspread, uttering meanwhile a low, hoarse grunt. June 16 several were heard, but after that date they became silent and disappeared entirely.

65. **Strix aluco aluco** L. BROWN OWL.—Two birds were seen September 14 in a Lombardy poplar at the side of a road, harassed by a small flock of Long-tailed Tits. This was my only record for the occurrence of this species.

66. **Circus æruginosus** (L.). MARSH HARRIER.—On August 18 one bird was flushed from the edge of the woods bordering the lake. It was surprisingly unsuspecting, not flying until approached within a few feet. This was my one record for the occurrence of this species.

67. **Circus cyaneus** (L.). HEN HARRIER.—On December 19 one bird, an adult, in the light bluish plumage, was seen circling and beating low over a large slashing in the pine woods. This was my only record for the occurrence of this species.

68. **Buteo buteo buteo** (L.). COMMON BUZZARD.—This bird was the most plentiful and the most frequently seen of any of this family. It was resident, and was observed throughout the year, flying low through the pine woods or soaring high overhead. During early spring it was rather noisy, and its scream was remarkably like that of our Red-shouldered Hawk.

69. **Pandion haliaëtus haliaëtus** (L.). OSPREY.—Two birds were seen June 23 hovering over the lake, and were the only ones of this species recorded. Observed from a distance, they appeared to differ in no way from our Osprey.

70. **Accipiter nisus nisus** (L.). SPARROW HAWK.—This bird was evidently resident and fairly plentiful in the pine woods. In appearance it was very similar to our Sharp-shinned Hawk and possessed the same habits and notes. On August 18 two were seen circling and soaring noisily overhead.

71. **Falco tinnuculus tinnuculus** L. KESTREL.—This bird closely resembled our Sparrow Hawk in appearance, actions, and notes. It was resident and fairly plentiful in the open cultivated country, where it was frequently seen hovering with rapidly beating wings over open fields.

72. **Ardea cinerea** L. COMMON HERON.—In size and general appearance this bird was much like our Great Blue Heron. It was but an irregular straggler, for it was seen but twice about the lake. On July 7 four birds

were flushed from the edge of the water at the upper end of the lake, and September 1 two birds were found at almost the same spot.

73. **Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos** L. WILD DUCK.— This bird resembled in every way our Mallard— size, plumage, habits, etc. It was a scarce migrant, and was found along the small streams or in the alder swamps. April 13 the first birds were seen, a male and female being flushed from a small pond at the edge of a stretch of woods. For the next few weeks one or two were occasionally observed, and April 29 the last ones for the spring were recorded. Three were seen that day circling over an alder swamp, and seemingly mating. The only record for the fall migration was December 25, four birds being flushed from a small stream.

74. **Columba palumbus palumbus** L. WOOD PIGEON.— This bird reminded me much of our common domestic pigeon, the main difference being the white wing bar, conspicuous in flight. It was also, however, somewhat larger. It occurred as a migrant and was, especially in the fall, very plentiful. In the spring it was seen but one day, February 24, but on that day was much in evidence, large flocks going by overhead for hours at a time. October 24—it was seen again, a flock of fully five hundred birds flying by high overhead. This was the largest number observed at one time, for, although for the next three weeks flocks of varying size were encountered, seventy-five were the most found together, and occasionally eight or ten only. They were seen in the tops of the pines and appeared to feed there entirely, never being flushed from the ground. December 15 the last birds for the year were seen, four flying from the edge of a short stretch of woods.

75. **Streptopelia turtur turtur** (L.). TURTLE DOVE.— This bird reminded me much of our Mourning Dove, but unlike it was a very scarce summer resident. The first bird appeared April 26, one being flushed from the upper branches of a pine at the edge of a stretch of woods. From that date on one was seen at infrequent intervals, flying by overhead or feeding at the edge of open fields. August 18 two birds were found feeding at the edge of the woods, but none were observed after that date.

76. **Gallinula chloropus chloropus** (L.). MOOR HEN.— This bird, so much like our Purple Gallinule in appearance, was seen but once. On July 28 two adult birds, with one half-grown young, were found feeding in the lily pads at the edge of a stretch of reeds bordering the lake.

77. **Fulica atra atra** L. COOT.— This bird was a scarce and irregular migrant, although several times it was seen in large numbers. March 10 some sixty of them were found at the lower end of the lake, feeding among the reeds close to the shore. None were then seen until August 18, when two of them were observed, this time at the upper end of the lake. December 15 one bird was flushed along a small stream, and December 22 fully a hundred were found feeding along the shore of the lake. In appearance this bird closely resembled our Coot.

78. **Squatarola squatarola**. BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER.— On May 12 four birds in full summer plumage were seen feeding in an open field at the

edge of a pool formed by an overflow of the lake. This was my only record for the occurrence of this species.

79. **Charadrius hiaticula hiaticula** L. RINGED PLOVER.—On May 19 two small flocks were seen, one on the ocean beach and the other on a sand bar in the middle of a stream. This was the only day on which this species was found here.

80. **Vanellus vanellus** (L.). LAPWING.—On April 28 one bird was seen feeding on marshy ground at the edge of the lake. This was my one record for the occurrence of this species.

81. **Scolopax rusticola** L. WOODCOCK.—On November 21 one bird was flushed from the edge of a stretch of woods bordering a stream. This was my only record for the occurrence of this species.

82. **Gallinago gallinago gallinago** (L.). COMMON SNIBE.—In appearance, actions, and notes this bird resembled in every way our Wilson's Snipe. It was a scarce migrant and was found in open, marshy places. During the spring it was seen but once, two birds being flushed on March 3 from the edge of a small stream in an open field. For the fall migration there were but two records, two birds on September 1 circling noisily high over the lake, and two on September 2 feeding at the edge of a marshy field.

83. **Pelidna alpina alpina** (L.). DUNLIN.—This little Sandpiper was easily recognized by the conspicuous black on its flanks. It was seen but once, four birds being found on May 19 feeding on a sand bar in the middle of a stream.

84. **Tringa ocropus** L. GREEN SANDPIPER.—This bird, so similar in appearance to our Solitary Sandpiper, was seen but once, one bird being found on April 11 feeding at the upper end of a large pond.

85. **Tringa glareola** L. WOOD SANDPIPER.—On June 23 one bird was seen feeding in a marshy field bordering the lake. This was my only record for the occurrence of this species.

86. **Actitis hypoleucos** (L.). COMMON SANDPIPER.—This bird closely resembled in actions our Spotted Sandpiper, being a common summer resident about the streams and the few scattered ponds. It was first seen April 21, and within a week was already fairly plentiful. In late summer small flocks began to appear, and on August 25 fully thirty of these birds were found feeding together at the upper end of the lake. The last one for the year was seen September 28 about a small stream.

87. **Tringa totanus** (L.). COMMON REDSHANK.—As its name implies, this bird was easily recognized by its long bright red legs and also by the white in its wings, conspicuous in flight. It was fairly plentiful as a spring migrant, and one pair remained late enough to have possibly nested. The first birds were seen May 19, six being found feeding on a sand bar in the middle of a stream, and for the next month or so small flocks were occasionally encountered, either on the ocean beach or along the shore of the lake. At the latter place two lingered until July 28, and there is a bare chance of their having bred there.

88. *Tringa nebularia* (Gunner). GREENSHANK.—In appearance this bird reminded me much of our Lesser Yellowlegs. It was seen but once, five birds being found on April 28 feeding in an inch or so of water in an open field at the edge of the lake.

89. *Larus fuscus fuscus* L. LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL.—On March 10 twenty birds were seen feeding along the ocean beach at low tide. This was my only record for the occurrence of this species.

90. *Larus argentatus* L. HERRING GULL.—This bird was seen but once, some twenty of them being found on December 26 feeding along the ocean beach.



NOTES ON BIRDS OF THE CHICAGO AREA AND ITS IMMEDIATE VICINITY.

BY C. W. G. EIFRIG.

WHILE using the Christmas vacation of 1918-19 to transcribe an accumulated mass of bird notes from my "day book" into my "ledger," *i. e.*, entering them under the names of the species, an intention of several years standing was strengthened into action, namely, to write up some interesting or striking experiences with and observations of birds and to record several rare occurrences. In the latter phase of the work, my friend and companion on many trips, Mr. H. L. Stoddard of the Harris Public School Extension of Field Museum, now in France, has lately rendered yeoman service by recording the seeing or taking of such rare species as the Long-tailed Jaeger, Black Rail, Roseate Tern, *Picoides arcticus*, Hoary Redpoll, Evening Grosbeak, Prairie Warbler and others (Auk, Vols. XXXIII and XXXIV). This present writing, then, is in part at least a continuation of his work, with the addition of such material as seems to me to be worthy of record. Many of my trips for years past have been to the Sand Dunes of northwestern Indiana, extending along the south shore of Lake Michigan from Gary on the west — the city made to order — to Michigan City on the east, a distance of twenty-five miles, by one to two miles wide. This is an immensely interesting region for various classes of nature